



EXHIBIT 3  
DATE 2/2/11  
HB 352

February 2, 2011

Natural Resources Committee  
Representative Gordon R Hendrick, Chairman

Re: HB 352 (Representative Osmundson)

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Laurel Riek and I am an Environmental Health Specialist for Lewis and Clark County. I have worked in this field for 27 years. I am speaking on behalf of the Association of Montana Public Health Officials and Lewis and Clark City-County Health Department in opposition of HB 352.

"Public water supply system" by definition is any water supply with at least 15 service connections or that serves at least 25 persons daily for any 60 or more days in a calendar year. This includes bars, restaurants, trailer courts, campgrounds, hotels, nursing homes, assisted living homes, daycare centers, subdivisions with a community water system and even municipal water systems.

It has been my experience that when a maximum contaminant level is exceeded, we work with operators to identify appropriate temporary measures for public safety and then to determine why the water is contaminated, and move toward a return to clean water. The temporary measures have included boil orders to kill bacteria, a temporary cistern for a well contaminated with petroleum hydrocarbons, temporary chlorination systems and even bottled water. The temporary measure chosen is contingent on what the contaminant is and the population at risk.

This bill states that a variance "shall be granted." It no longer takes into consideration the use of the water, the contaminant, or the population that is served. This has the potential to be a public health emergency.

Water for drinking is only a small part of what is used from the faucet. We use water for showers, hand washing, washing vegetables, brushing our teeth, and cooking. In addition, soda fountains mix syrup with tap water. Ice machines use tap water. Using contaminated water for these everyday functions puts the public at risk of serious diarrheal diseases, such as campylobacteriosis, cryptosporidiosis, giardiasis, and norovirus. These conditions can be life threatening, particularly for high risk populations such as babies, elderly and people with chronic disease such as diabetes and cancer.

Please do not allow contaminated water to be provided through Montana's public water supply.